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ABSTRACT

The book provides over 1,200 conversation topics for English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) instruction, grouped into six kinds of conversation activities. An introductory chapter describes the monitored conversation procedure, a classroom technique for recognizing language usage errors and reinforcing the correct form or vocabulary item. Subsequent chapters contain the six types of classroom conversation activity, described in some detail, with a list of recommended conversation topics for that activity type. The activities include: role-plays; interviews; chain stories; talks (self-expression, personal narrative); problem-solving; and discussion. A method for teachers to use in organizing activities and keeping records is also outlined. (MSE)

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Conversation Inspirations for ESL

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Conversation Inspirations for ESL

Supplementary Materials Handbook Three

Illustrated by Patrick R. Moran

Nancy Ellen Zelman

PRO LINGUA ASSOCIATES

To My Mother and Father
and Those Who Love Me

With Thanks For Your Inspirations

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Table of Contents

Introduction v

Monitored Conversation Procedure vi
Mistake Cards vii
Mistake Correction viii
Mistake Card Fun x

Role-Plays 1

Role-Play Procedures 2
Advice 4
Business/School 6
Complaints 9
Conflict 12
Dating 15
Descriptions 18
Directions 20
Emotion 22
Explanations 23
Famous People 25
Health 27
Introductions/Invitations/Farewells 29
Parent-Child Problems 31
Restaurants 33
Roommates 35
Spouses 37
Telephone 39
Telling the Truth 41
Travel 43

Interviews 45

Interview Procedures 46
Family 48
Laughter 49
Men, Women, and Children 50
Minorities 51
Native Country 52
People 53
Personal Data 54
Personal Values 55
Personal Experience 56
Politics 57

School/Work 58
Television 59
What If 60

Chain Stories 62

Chain Story Procedures 62
Stories 63

Talks 65

Talk Procedures 66
Comparisons 67
Hopes, Fears, and Opinions 69
Personal Experiences 70
Self-Description 72

Problems 73

Problem Solving Procedures 73
Proverbs 74
Superstitions 77

Discussions 79

Discussion Procedures 80
Opinions 81
Philosophical Issues 82
Social Issues 84

Postscript 86

Activity Code

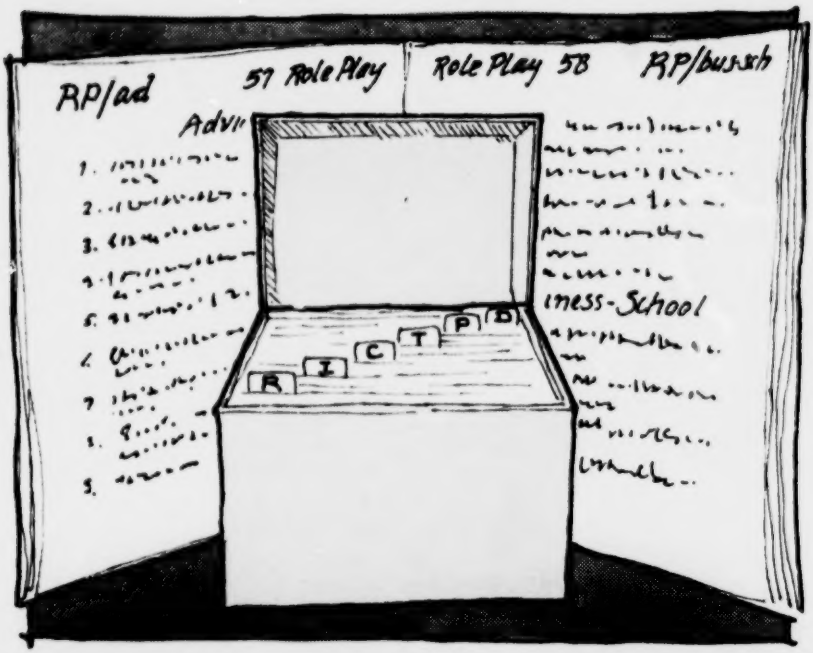
R — *Role-Play*
I — *Interviews*
C — *Chain Stories*
T — *Talks*
P — *Problems*
D — *Discussions*

Introduction

This book is a collection of over 1200 conversation topics grouped into six kinds of conversation activities. For each activity there is a description of suggested procedures for carrying out the activity.

The most effective way of using the topics listed in this book is to write the topic on a 3 X 5 index card and give the card to the students to hold and refer to as they engage in the activity. This very simple device not only creates the effect of playing a kind of card game, it also allows you, the teacher, to build a collection of cards that can be used over and over. The cards can be retained after each use and stored in a small file box for future use.

Although you may choose to use and store these cards in different ways, their day-to-day use can be facilitated by following the simple classification system presented in the book. The book then becomes a quick and easy index to what is contained in the file box. Each section is coded according to the name of the activity, and the topical area. Thus, **R-ad** means role play (activity) advice (topic).



The number of topics presented in this book is obviously finite, but it is equally obvious that the list is actually endless. Undoubtedly, you and your students will make up additional topics of interest and thereby add to the collection. For that reason, additional space has been provided at the end of each list to allow your own collection to grow to meet the particularities of your own teaching situation.

Although these topics can be used in a variety of ways, from totally free conversation to carefully monitored conversation, the general procedure and mistake correction techniques outlined in the next few pages may help your students increase the accuracy of their spoken English.

Monitored Conversation Procedure

This basic procedure can be used with most of the activities.

1. Call two students up to the front of the class and ask them to sit in two chairs facing each other, while the rest of the class is seated in a semi-circle. The students seated in the "hot seats" get a conversation card.

2. Explain that the two students up front must speak to each other for three minutes, talking about the situation or topic on the card.

3. Explain that the cards merely function to promote linguistic interaction, and that what is important is not the topic per se, but the language used by the two students.

4. Then explain the responsibility of the monitoring students, which is to listen for inappropriate speech, mispronounciation, and incorrect grammar. When a mistake is heard, the listeners write down the phrase or sentence in which the mistake was made. The listener's job is just as important as the speakers' job because an awareness of mistakes is the first step toward avoiding mistakes in one's own speech.

5. As an alternative, assign half the class to listen to one of the speakers, and the rest of the class to the other.

6. One of the listeners gets the job of time-keeper, and when the pair in front is ready, the timekeeper says "Go" and the speakers converse.

7. At the end of three minutes, the timekeeper says, "Stop."

8. Call upon the listeners one at a time to identify the mistakes that they heard.

9. The student who has made the mistake tries to correct it, but if he is unable to do so, the other listeners can be called upon to make the correction.

10. If no one is able to correct the mistake, explain the problem and correct it. If most of the students do not know what the error is, ask all the students to write the mistake in their notebook, and next to it a large "X." Then correct the mistake and have all the students write the correct form in their books.

Mistake Cards

At the first conversation class, hand out blank index cards and have each student write his name at the top. Tell the students to bring these cards with them each time they have conversation class. On these cards you will write the errors that the student makes when he is engaged in a conversation activity. Point out to the students that this is indeed a rare opportunity for you to help each of them individually with his own language problems.

When two students are called up to the "hot seats" they give you their mistake cards. As the listeners are writing the errors they hear in their notebooks, you are writing the mistakes on the students' mistake cards. When the three minute interaction is completed, and you have gone around the room asking the listeners to identify the problems, read the additional errors that none of the monitoring students identified. Note: It is important to be aware that not

every mistake must be corrected at this time. Usually five mistakes in addition to those the students have found will be quite sufficient. The students who make these mistakes should always be encouraged, not discouraged.

Call on the students to make the corrections, and have the other students repeat the correct form and copy it into their notebooks. When this is completed, return the mistake cards to their owners. The cards will only have the mistakes written on them, so inform the students that it is their responsibility to correct these cards (in pencil so that the corrections can be seen) and to study them. Since the class has just gone over the mistakes orally, the students should immediately correct the card and study the correct forms.

Once a week you can collect all the students' mistake cards and give them an oral quiz by calling on each student and reading one of his mistakes out loud. You may want to call on other students in the class to see if they can correct the mistakes of others.

Mistake Correction

It is very important that the students themselves try to recognize their own mistakes. If they are able to do this, they are at least aware of the correct form, and with more practice of the correct form, they will become more accurate in their speech. Your job is to facilitate the students' realization of these errors by simply calling attention to the fact that an error has been made. You should be the last person to correct the mistakes, and not the first. All the students in the class should work on trying to figure out the correction, and only after this has failed should you interfere. In this way, each student has the responsibility for thinking about linguistic accuracy.

When going over mistakes, you should have the students write the sentence with the mistake in their books, and mark an "X" next to it so they will later be aware that the sentence was indeed erroneous. If the students are unable to correct the mistake, you can explain the correct form, write it on the blackboard, and have all the students copy it.

You may want to use the corrections as a springboard for a mini-grammar lesson, using substitution drills. For example:

Student A: I don't know tennis.

Teacher: Indicates a mistake has been made.

Student B: I don't know how to play tennis.

Teacher: Basketball...

Student A: I don't know how to play basketball.

In this way you are including all the students in the correction process, and not only the student who has made the original mistake.

After the students have been in the "hot seat" and after they have received their mistake cards you should always allow sufficient time to correct the mistakes. If the student waits too long, he may forget the explanation and correction.

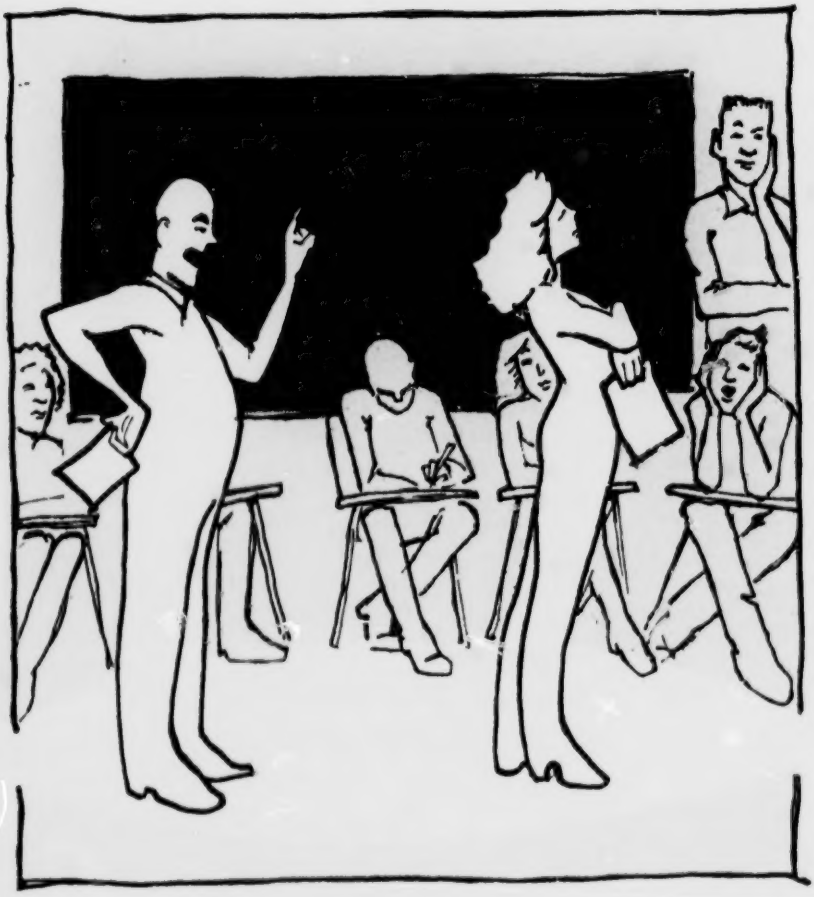
All error correction is done solely for the benefit of the students, and it is important for you to be aware that some students (especially at first) may be intimidated by this correction procedure. It is up to you to do this error correction gently, with teaching as the aim, not fault finding. At the beginning, one or two errors corrected may be sufficient for each student, and as the students become more comfortable with the procedure, the amount of error correction may be increased.

Mistake Card Fun

Game #1: Make a list of the students in the class on the blackboard. Collect the students' mistake cards. Read off one or two mistakes from each card. If the student thinks the mistake is his, he must raise a hand. If he is correct, the student gets a point. If incorrect, he gets a minus 1. If the student is unable to correct the mistake, the first person in the class to raise his hand gets the opportunity to correct it and get or lose a point. If no one is able to correct the mistake, the teacher should once again correct the mistake at the blackboard and have all the students copy the corrected form. At the end of the alloted time, the student with the most points is the winner.

Game #2: Collect all the mistake cards, and at home, make up a list of incorrect sentences. Then divide the class into two or three groups, and give each group a copy of the incorrect sentences. The first group to correct the most sentences wins. A variation of this can be to make a list of correct and incorrect sentences, and have the students identify the correct sentences and correct the incorrect ones.

Game #3: From the mistake cards, dictate a sentence with an error in it. The first student to correct the sentence wins a point.



Role-Plays

Role-plays require the students to assume an identity and think and speak in that character's identity. For some students this is much easier than expressing themselves personally.

Procedures

1 Have two students come to the front of the classroom and take the "hot seats." Give (or have the student choose) a role-playing card, and have them follow the monitored conversation procedure as described in the introduction.

2 Divide the class into small groups of 3 - 5 students and give each group a card. Two students must role-play and the other students are assigned to monitor the students who are speaking. After three minutes, the groups go over the mistakes they noticed while you circulate and answer questions, aiding and correcting. You may or may not ask the role-playing students to put their mistake cards on the desk in front of them. In this way you can sit in on each group and write the mistakes heard on the mistake cards. After the group goes over the mistakes they have found, the students read their mistake cards out loud and the entire group works on correction.

3 Group the students in pairs and ask all the students to turn their mistake cards upside down, so they will face you as you walk around the room. Give each pair a card and ask each pair to begin talking about the card. Stop the conversation at the end of three minutes. During this time, circulate, listen in on each pair, and write one or two mistakes on the corresponding mistake cards. At the end of three minutes, instruct the pairs to pass their card to the left. This procedure of timing the conversations, noting the mistakes on mistake cards, and passing cards to the next pair is repeated until each pair has seen each card. Then the students can look at their mistake cards and together with their partners, correct the mistakes that were made. You can assist in this, working with each pair.

4 Divide the students into pairs and give each set the same (or different) cards. The students have fifteen minutes to prepare a short role-play to the class. You can monitor the mistakes using the monitored conversation procedure.

5 Group the students into pairs and ask them to write a dialogue that will be presented to the class. You can use monitored conversation procedure to monitor, or you can collect the dialogues and correct them.

6 You may want to introduce selected new vocabulary before a role-play or dialogue. The students can be asked to use these words in their role-plays.

Advice

1. Your friend is getting very drunk at a party. Tell him/her not to drink so much.
2. Your friend was just fired from his/her job because of rudeness to the employer. Tell your friend what you think he/she should do.
3. Your friend wants to get married. You think he/she is too young. Tell him/her what you think he/she ought to do.
4. Your friend thinks that she is pregnant. What should she do?
5. Your friend's girlfriend is pregnant. Your friend comes to you to find out what you think he should do.
6. Your friend is very sick and you think he/she should go to the hospital. Convince your friend to go.
7. You are failing an important class at the university. Ask your counselor what you should do.
8. You are at an interview. You want to get into a very prestigious school. Explain to the Dean of Admissions why you think you should be accepted.
9. Ask your friend which he thinks is more practical - dropping out of school and getting a job or continuing at school and having very little money.
10. Your friend is having some problems with his/her teenage child. Tell your friend what you would do in his/her situation.
11. You bought a new car several months ago, but now find that you are unable to make the payments. Ask your friend what you should do.
12. You are taking a trip to Europe tomorrow. You knew you had your passport, but you just can't seem to find it. Ask your travel agent what you should do.
13. Your house is infested with fleas. Call the landlord and ask him/her what you should do.
14. You saw your neighbor beating his/her children. Ask your friend what he/she thinks you should do about it.

15. Two of your best friends just had a tremendous fight. Go over to the house of one of them and tell him/her to make up.

16. You think your partner is having an affair with someone else. Ask your best friend what you should do.

17. Although you have a girlfriend/boyfriend, you just met someone who is very attractive to you. Ask your friend what you should do.

18. Your friend is taking drugs. Tell him/her what you think he/she should do.

19. You are constantly worried about exams. You get so nervous you have headaches and stomach aches. Talk to your mother/father about your problem.

20. You parked your car in an illegal parking spot. You come out of a shop and find that it is being towed away. Find out from the policeman what you should do.

21. Your house is next to the airport and the noise is driving you crazy. Ask your friend what you should do.

22. Every time you go anywhere you get lost. Ask your friend what you can do.

23. You have a terrible fear of being in an airplane. Talk to your psychiatrist.

24. Your best friend tells you he/she thinks he/she is a homosexual. Tell him/her what you think about that.

25. Your friend is getting fat. Tell him/her what he/she should do about it.

26. Your friend is going to have an interview for a job tomorrow. He/she wants some advice from you as to what to wear, say, and do.

27. Your friend wants to return to his/her native country because he/she misses his/her mate. Advise him/her as to what should be done.

28. Your roommate said he was going away for the weekend and would be back by Monday morning. It is now Tuesday night. Ask your friend what he/she thinks you should do.

29. You have been to a party. It's late at night and you can't find your keys. Tell the host of the party about your problem.

30. By mistake you made plans for the evening with two men/women. You like both of them very much. Ask your friend what he/she thinks you should do about this problem.
31. You have an oral report to give tomorrow at school and you need to work on it but your close friend is having a going away party because he/she is leaving the country. Talk to another friend and find out what he/she thinks you should do.
32. Your friend is always in need of money. For the third time this week he/she asks to borrow some money from you. Tell him/her what you think he/she should do about his/her financial problems.
33. You see someone going into a neighbor's window. Ask your roommate if you should call the police.
34. Your friend is having trouble making new friends. Tell him/her what he/she should do.

Business/School

1. You go to an interview for a job, but you have no experience. Explain to the interviewer why you should have the job.
2. Speak to the personnel officer and ask him/her for an application and an interview appointment.
3. Talk to your manager. Ask for a raise.
4. Talk to your boss. Tell him/her that you feel you deserve a promotion.

5. Explain to the company manager why you think you should be hired for a position advertised in the newspaper.
6. Go to an employment agency. Ask them if they have any job that you might be qualified to do.
7. Tell your employer that someone is stealing money from the company.
8. You must fire one of your workers because he/she has not been doing a very good job. Ask him/her to come into your office.
9. You feel that your employer is unjustly picking on you. Talk to him/her about this.
10. One of your co-workers is constantly talking to you and you find it difficult to perform your duties. Tell him/her this.
11. Explain to your boss that the reason you haven't been able to get much work done lately is because you are having troubles at home.
12. Someone has called you to do some work in his/her house. Talk to this person about the price and the kind of work you would be doing.
13. Your boss blames you for an accident which occurred at your company. You did not cause the accident. Speak to your employer about his mistake.
14. Your boss is constantly pressuring you to work overtime. You need to get home to your family. Explain this to your boss.
15. Tell one of your employees that he/she has been taking too long on breaks and for lunch.
16. Ask one of your employees why he/she is always late.
17. Explain to a new employee what his/her duties will be.
18. You have noticed that one of your co-workers is drinking on the job. Talk to him/her about it.
19. Tell your boss that someone you are working with is drinking heavily on the job.
20. Someone who works at the company asks you if he/she can get his/her spouse a job at the company too. You are the chief of personnel. Discuss this with him/her.
21. You hired someone to do a job in your home. The workmanship is very bad. Talk to him/her about this.

22. Go to the Better Business Bureau and complain. You paid a TV repair shop to fix your television, but they did not fix it. Now they refuse to give your money back.

23. You bought a camera. You used it only one day and it fails to work. It has a warranty and you have the receipt. Talk to the store manager.

24. You bought a used car from a car dealer who promised you that the car was in fine working order. After driving around for a week, you find there is an oil leak. Bring it back to the dealer.

25. You brought your car to a mechanic because you had a gas leak. After you pay the mechanic and drive your car home, you realize that the leak is still there. Go back to the mechanic.

26. You want to sell your old used bicycle. Discuss the price with a friend who might want to buy it.

27. You are thinking about starting your own shop. Talk to a bank manager about the possibility of taking out a loan.

28. You want to start a business but you need capital. Talk to your friend about becoming a partner and investing in the company.

29. You want to buy a new car but you don't have enough money. Talk to the dealer about monthly payments. Tell him/her what you could afford to pay.

30. Tell your employer that you want to quit the company because you have found a better job with higher pay somewhere else.

31. Your boss calls you to his/her office to tell you that you have been replaced by a computer.

32. Your boss calls you to his/her office to ask you to take a voluntary pay cut.

33. Ask your co-worker (who is from another country) about job opportunities in his/her country.

34. You want to enroll in school. Ask the receptionist for some information and an entrance application.

35. Ask your school counselor where he/she thinks you should apply for graduate work.

36. Your friend has been accepted to the school of her choice. You were rejected. Tell her how you feel.

37. Tell your teacher that you want to apply to a university in the U.S. and ask if he/she would write you a recommendation.

38. Even though your grades are not very god, you think you want to go to university. Talk to your school counselor about the possibilities open to you.

Complaints

1. You bought an item that was marked "Final Sale." When you brought the item home, you found it did not work. Bring it back to the store.

2. Complain to the store manager that the salespeople in that store are rude.

3. You are at a barbecue. The hamburger you were given is not fully cooked. Ask the cook to put it back on the grill again.

4. You bought a used TV at the Swap Meet. You find an outlet there and plug it in. It doesn't work. Go back to the person you bought it from.

5. Complain to the manager of your apartment building that there is too much noise at night and you can't sleep.

6. You buy a gold chain from a very expensive shop. After wearing it for several months, it turns your neck green. Bring it back to the store.

7. Your neighbors are having a big party. It is two o'clock in the morning. Go next door and complain about the noise.

8. Someone is smoking in a non-smoking section on the bus. Complain to the driver.

9. You are in a movie theater and the person in front of you is wearing a very large hat. Ask the person to take it off.

10. You brought your stereo into a shop to be repaired. After two weeks you are informed that it is repaired. When you take it home you find out it is still not working properly. Bring it back to the repair shop.

11. You are at a movie theater watching a movie. A woman in your row is holding a screaming baby. Ask her to leave the theater so that you can enjoy the movie.
12. You have just bought some groceries at the supermarket. When you look at your change you realize you have overpaid. Tell the cashier.
13. You are at a concert and the quality of the sound is very poor. Complain about it.
14. You bought an article of clothing. You washed it once, and it has shrunk. Bring it back to the shop.
15. You bought a new car but you have had several problems with it. Tell the dealer you want your money back.
16. You just took a very difficult exam. You feel the exam was unfair because there were several things on it that your class had not studied. Complain to the teacher.
17. Your teacher has given you a grade which you feel is unfair. Talk to your teacher about this.
18. You just received your telephone bill. There are several calls listed that were made to a country that you have never heard of. Bring your bill into the telephone company and tell them.
19. You bought some milk at the supermarket. When you get home you find that the milk is sour. Bring it back to the supermarket.
20. You bought a pair of shoes at a department store. You cut the string tying the pair together in order to see if they fit comfortably. When you try to return the shoes, the salespeople will not take them because the string has been cut. Discuss this with the manager of the store.
21. You are paying for your child to take swimming lessons. When you arrive at the pool, you see there is no supervision. Complain to the swimming instructor and tell him/her that you feel this is unsafe.
22. Your next door neighbor is always sun bathing in the nude. You can see him/her from your yard. Complain to him/her about this.
23. Your neighbor has a very noisy dog. Complain to him/her about this.
24. The person who works at the desk next to you is constantly on the telephone. Complain to the person about this.

25. Your friend is always complaining to you about something. Tell him/her that you do not want to hear these complaints any more.

26. A friend of yours is constantly calling you up late at night. Ask him/her to stop.

27. Your friend always embarrasses you when you go to a restaurant because of the way he/she eats. Talk to your friend about this.

28. Your neighbors are always leaving a lot of garbage in the street near your house. Complain about this.

29. You left your children with a baby sitter. When you returned home you found the baby sitter asleep and your children crying. Talk to your baby sitter about this.

30. You ordered something from a mail order catalogue. When you received the item you found that it did not fit the description of the item in the catalogue. Go to the Better Business Bureau and complain.

31. You are the airport. When your bags come off the ramp at the baggage claim, they are badly damaged. Ask for a claim form so that you can get your bags repaired free of charge.

32. You have fleas in your apartment. Tell the apartment manager and ask him/her to get you an exterminator. You feel that the manager should pay for the extermination.

33. Your landlord just called and told you he/she is raising the rent again, the third time in six months. Talk to your landlord about this.

34. You have just moved into your house and find that there are several broken windows. Tell your landlord about this.

35. You just bought an item of clothing at one store, and see it on sale for much less money at another shop. Try to return the item you bought at the higher priced store.

Conflict

1. Your "friend" has been talking about you behind your back. Confront him/her about this.
2. It's 2 in the morning. Your friend calls you up because he/she is very upset.
3. Your friend wants to borrow something of yours. You don't want to lend it.
4. Your friend was supposed to pick you up two hours ago. He/she has just shown up. Tell him/her you are angry.
5. You have an important exam tomorrow. A friend of yours comes over and begs you to go to a movie with him/her.
6. There is a big dance tonight and you must take a partner with you. Ask your friend if you can borrow his girlfriend/boyfriend.
7. You want to watch a movie on TV but your friend wants to watch a sports match.
8. You are stopped by a policeman because he/she thinks you are drunk.
9. Someone is knocking at your door. It is 4 in the morning. Tell him/her to go away and let you sleep.
10. Your father/mother is getting senile. Talk to him/her about moving into an old age home.
11. You and your friend are driving to school and you see an accident. You want to report it, but your friend doesn't want to be late to school.
12. You are driving your friend somewhere. Tell him/her to put on the seatbelt. Your friend refuses.
13. Someone is smoking on an elevator. Ask him/her to put the cigarette out.
14. You are sitting in a movie theater. The people behind you are making a lot of noise. Ask them to be quiet.
15. Your friend has been rude to his/her teacher. Tell your friend that you feel that kind of behavior is inappropriate.
16. Your friend has started to smoke pot. Tell him/her that you think he/she is making a terrible mistake.

17. Your friend is getting married soon. You have heard a lot of bad things about his/her partner. Tell your friend.
18. Your teacher has given you a very low mark on a composition that you worked hard on. Talk to your teacher about this.
19. You think that your friend has been taking some of your things without permission. Talk to your friend.
20. You are leaving a supermarket and look at your receipt. You think the cashier has overcharged you. Bring this to his/her attention.
21. You and your friend are supposed to be doing a research paper together. You have done a lot of work, but your friend has done nothing. Tell your friend how you feel.
22. You see someone who you think is a friend of yours at a party. When you rush over to him/her you realize that he/she is not your friend, but rather it is someone you don't know.
23. Your friend is always bossing you around. Tell him/her that you want to make your own decisions.
24. Everyone is going to a party where there are going to be a lot of drugs and alcohol. Tell your friend that you really don't want to go.
25. Your friend never wants to go anywhere. There's going to be a great party tomorrow night at a mutual friend's house. Convince him/her to go.
26. Your friend is laughing at someone who is physically handicapped. Tell him/her you find that kind of behavior unacceptable.
27. Your friend is getting drunk at a party. Tell him/her that it is time to go home.
28. Your friend is drunk but wants to drive home from the bar. Take his/her car keys.
29. Tell your parents that you are moving out of their house and getting your own place.
30. Tell your father that you do not want to work for his company any more.
31. Your friend wants to borrow $1,000. When you tell him/her you do not have it, he/she gets angry.

32. Your friend asked you to pick something up for him/her at the store. When you bring it home, he/she tells you it is the wrong thing. Your friend wants you to go back to the store and return it, but you don't want to go.

33. Tell your friend that you wrecked his/her car.

34. Tell your teacher that you want to quit school.

35. It is 3 in the morning. Your roommate has forgotten his/her car keys again. As your roommate bangs on the door, tell him/her to find somewhere else to sleep and to leave you alone.

36. You leave your car illegally parked and go into a shop. When you come out, a policeman is writing you a ticket. Talk to him.

37. Your friend is always late. Today he/she was supposed to meet you at 3:00. It is now 5:00. Tell your friend you are very tired of this behavior.

38. A relative has been visiting you. You feel that it is time this relative left. Tell him/her in a nice way.

39. You left your keys inside your locker at work. You see the janitor of the building, but he/she is in a rush. Ask the janitor to open your locker for you.

40. Your student is constantly late and has been absent for several tests. Ask him/her to come into your office. Tell him/her to "shape up."

41. You think your class is too difficult. Your teacher feels you just need to work harder. Discuss this with your teacher.

42. You are shopping in a supermarket. A guard comes up to you and tells you that you are being arrested for shoplifting. Tell him/her you are innocent.

Dating

1. Your boyfriend/girlfriend from your hometown is visiting you. Explain to him/her that you have been dating someone here.
2. A man continually invites you to go out with him, but you can't stand him at all. Tell him to leave you alone once and for all.
3. Tell your boyfriend that you are pregnant and he must marry you right away.
4. Your boyfriend wants to elope but you don't. Try to dissuade him.
5. Tell your fiance that you want to call off the engagement.
6. Ask your girlfriend to marry you.
7. Try to get your boyfriend to propose to you.
8. Your girlfriend wants to get married, but you aren't sure about it. Talk to your best friend about it.
9. Ask your friend about married life. Explain to him/her that your are interested in getting married, but you aren't sure if now is a good time.
10. You have no money. Nevertheless, you promised to take your girlfriend/boyfriend out to dinner. Explain your situation to your friend.
11. You want to go out with a friend of yours but want to be sure that you both understand that you are going dutch. Talk about it.
12. Talk to the father of the woman who you would like to marry.
13. You meet your blind date at a coffee shop. You are shocked because he/she looks nothing like the way he/she was described to you. Talk to your date.
14. Your date believes in sex on the first date and you don't. Discuss your differences in opinion.
15. Your friend has invited you out and takes you to a very expensive restaurant. When the bill comes, he/she tells you that your half comes to 55 dollars. Tell him/her that your thought he/she was going to pay, and that you think his/her behavior is rude.

16. Your best friend is dating someone you really like. Talk to your friend.
17. You saw your girlfriend/boyfriend with another man/woman. You are very jealous. Talk to her/him about this.
18. Your boyfriend wants to have a big wedding, but you want to have a very small one. Discuss it.
19. You find that your girlfriend/boyfriend has lied to you about something. Confront him/her with this.
20. Tell your friend about your first girlfriend/boyfriend.
21. You want a child but you don't want to marry. Ask a friend to be the father/mother of a child for you.
22. Your friend wants to know why he/she doesn't have many dates. Explain gently that he/she should do something about his/her appearance.
23. Your friend wants you to help him/her get a date. You don't want to get involved. Tell him/her this.
24. You think your friend has been flirting with your boyfriend/girlfriend. Confront him/her with this.
25. Try to get a man/woman you are interested in to ask you out on a date.
26. You and your girlfriend usually stay home on weekends and watch TV. Tell your friend that you want to go out on a big date.
27. Your friend is confused about dating. Talk to him/her about dating customs.
28. Ask a friend for his/her advice on putting an advertisement in a newspaper to get dates.
29. You find that you are always paying for the dates you and your boyfriend have. Talk to him about this.
30. You want to have a lot of children but your boyfriend/girlfriend doesn't want to have any. Discuss this with him/her.
31. You are on your first date with a friend who you really like. All of a sudden, you feel ill. When you tell him/her this he/she thinks you are making it up because you don't like him/her. Talk to him/her.

32. You want to go home but your date wants to stay out all night and dance with you.

33. Try to convince your date to go to a party. He/she does not want to go because he/she feels he/she will not know anyone there.

34. Your parent does not like the man/woman you are going out with. Tell you parent what a good person your friend is.

35. You are calling to pick up your date. Your date's father comes to the door, and it is obvious that he doesn't like you. Try to be friendly.

36. You are on a date and you think your date is flirting with someone else. Tell your date to stop this.

37. Try to get a friend of yours to go out with another friend of yours on a blind date.

38. Explain to your girlfriend/boyfriend that you are the type of person who never wants to get married.

39. Ask your friend what he/she thought of your girlfriend/boyfriend (you have the feeling that when you introduced them, they knew each other).

40. Tell your friend that you don't like his/her girlfriend/boyfriend.

41. Explain to your best friend that the new person he/she is dating is someone you used to date.

42. Tell your friend that you are in love with his/her boyfriend/girlfriend.

43. Tell your platonic friend that you are becoming sexually attracted to him/her.

44. You think your date is being chauvinistic. Talk to him about it.

45. Your date tells you that he/she thinks money is not important for happiness. You think it is very necessary. Discuss the relationship between money and happiness.

46. You are fourteen years old. Ask your mother if you can go out on a date with a boy in your class.

47. Tell your son/daughter that you do not approve of his/her new girlfriend/boyfriend.
48. Ask a woman/man you really like to go out on a date with you.

Descriptions

1. You are at the airport. You are waiting for your friend to arrive. He told you that he would be on a flight arriving at 8 o'clock. It is now 11 o'clock. Ask a person waiting at one of the counters if he/she knows anything about your friend.
2. Someone just stole your wallet. Go to the police station and describe the person that you think stole it.
3. You saw someone leaning against your car as you walked past. When you returned ten minutes later, your car was gone. Describe the person to the police.
4. Ask your friend if he/she has seen your sister. She was supposed to meet you in front of your house at 3:00. It is now 5:00.
5. Your family wants to know all about the people in your class. Describe them.
6. Describe the nicest part of this city to someone who does not live here.
7. Describe some of the teachers at this school to a student who is just beginning the program.
8. Describe your favorite actor/actress. Ask your friend about his/her favorite.
9. You have just seen a person set fire to a building. The police come. Describe the person you saw to the police.

10. Someone on the bus dropped his/her wallet as he/she left the bus. Tell the bus driver and describe the person to the driver.
11. Someone was following you home last night. Tell the police and describe the person.
12. Describe your sister or brother to someone who wants to meet her/him.
13. You just met the most handsome man you have ever seen. Tell your friend what he looked like.
14. Your spouse/girlfriend/boyfriend is still in your native country. Your are homesick. Tell your friend about the person you left behind.
15. Describe the most beautiful sunset you ever saw.
16. Describe your apartment to your friend.
17. Tell your friend that you are crazy about someone, but don't want to mention the name. Describe the person.
18. You see someone running away from a murder. Tell the police.
19. Your friend has been missing for two days. Describe him/her to the police.
20. You saw your girlfriend/boyfriend with someone. Ask your girlfriend/boyfriend who it was.
21. Tell your friend about someone you met at a bar last night.
22. Tell your friend about your favorite person in your native country.
23. Tell your friend about your family and ask him/her about his/hers.
24. Call up someone whose apartment is advertised in the newspaper. Ask the person on the phone to describe the place to you.
25. Your friend just bought a new house. Find out about it.
26. Your cat is missing. Ask your neighbor if he/she has seen it.
27. Your friend tells you that he/she is going to get married. Ask him/her to tell you about his/her fiance/fiancee.

28. Describe the nicest place in your native country.
29. You came to a disco with your friend. The two of you got separated. Ask someone if he/she has seen your friend anywhere.
30. You call up a blind date. Ask him/her what he/she looks like and describe yourself.
31. Your friend wants you to double date with another person. Ask your friend to describe your date and then you will make your decision.

Directions

1. You are lost. You want to go downtown. Ask someone on the street to help you.
2. Ask someone to explain how to get to the nearest bank.
3. Ask your friend to explain to you how to get to the library.
4. Ask for directions to the nearest supermarket.
5. You have been driving for nearly an hour when your car breaks down. Stop someone on the highway and ask where you can find a mechanic.
6. You are on the wrong bus. Ask the driver how you can get back to the school.
7. Your friend is coming to visit you from your native country. You will be in school when he/she gets here. Explain how to get to the school.
8. Find out where to get your telephone hooked up.
9. You have to get your gas and electricity started. Ask your friend where you need to go.
10. Find out where the best restaurants are in this city.
11. Your friend wants to meet you at a movie theater but does not know where it is. Explain how to get there.

12. Your friend has just bought a car but is very nervous about driving it. He/she wants to make sure he/she knows how to get to your house. Go over the directions with him/her.
13. You are out on a date. You and your friend need to pick up another couple. Direct your date to their house from yours.
14. You meet an old friend of yours on the street. Tell him/her about your new apartment and explain where it is.
15. You have rearranged all the furniture in your house. You meet your roommate at a coffee shop. Explain to your friend where you put the furniture.
16. You were supposed to meet your friend at a specific street corner. After waiting half an hour, ask someone on the street if you are at the right corner. He/she tells you that there is another corner that meets your description and that perhaps you should go there. Ask the person to direct you.
17. You have never been to your date's house before. Ask him/her to explain how to get there.
18. You are looking for a used car to buy. Call up a person whose name you found in the paper. Ask for directions to his/her house so that you can see the car.
19. Ask a bartender at a bar where the bathroom is.
20. You asked for directions to the bathroom, but you cannot find it. Ask the person again.

Emotion

1. Your friend is very impatient. Tell him/her that you think this is a very bad characteristic. Talk about different ways of passing the time while waiting.
2. You have a very bad temper. Ask your friend what he/she does when angry.
3. Find out the type of temperament your partner has.
4. Ask your partner what he/she does when angered.
5. Your friend is in a really bad mood. Try to cheer him/her up.
6. Talk to your partner about the things which irritate you and how to avoid these things.
7. Find out what kinds of things make your partner nervous. Discuss various ways to calm down.
8. Find out the things which frighten your partner. Ask him/her what he/she does in those situations.
9. Your friend is very upset about something but won't tell you what the matter is. Try to comfort him/her.
10. Ask your partner if he/she thinks it's better to hold in anger or to release it.
11. Tell your partner you feel lonely and homesick.
12. Apologize to your friend for saying something to him/her in anger.
13. Your friend had a fight with you. Demand an apology from him/her for something that he/she said to you.
14. Your friend is having a very important interview tomorrow. He/she seems so worried about it that you are afraid it is going to affect his/her performance. Talk to him/her.
15. Your friend is making fun of a man/woman that you like. Tell your friend that you are angry about this.
16. Your friend is about to get married. He/she is very nervous. Tell him/her not to worry.
17. Your teacher is angry with you because you constantly forget to do your homework. Go up to your teacher and try to explain.

18. Ask your friend to forgive you for saying something nasty to him/her.
19. Apologize for throwing something at your friend in anger. Explain that you have a bad temper and must learn how to control it.
20. Your friend never shows any emotion. Tell him/her that you think this is unhealthy.

Explanations

1. Your friend is having a party. Suggest a game to play and explain how to play it.
2. Explain to your friend how to meet a member of the opposite sex.
3. Explain how to do something that you do well.
4. Your friend is having trouble with someone who likes him/her, but he/she doesn't like at all. Explain to your friend what he/she must do to get rid of the woman/man.
5. Explain to your friend how to make your teachers angry without being thrown out of class.
6. Explain how to cheat on a test without getting caught.
7. Your friend needs to borrow some money. Explain how he/she can get someone to lend him/her some.
8. Your friend has a lot of plants which seem to be dying. Explain how to take care of these plants.
9. Your friend usually drinks too much at parties. Explain how to drink without getting drunk.
10. Your friend is in love with someone who does not respond. Explain how to get someone to love you.
11. Your friend is always acting depressed. Explain how to act cheerful even if you are upset.
12. Your friend has been rejected by a member of the opposite sex. Explain how to get over a broken heart.

13. Your friend always gets a bad sunburn when he/she goes out on the beach. Explain what he/she should do to avoid this, and how he/she can get a good tan.
14. Your friend does not know how to roller skate. Since he/she is nervous about going skating for the first time, explain that there is really nothing to be nervous about.
15. Explain to your teacher why you never to your homework and why you have failed all the tests in the class.
16. Explain to your friend why you need to copy his homework.
17. Explain to your parents why you didn't come home the night before.
18. Your boyfriend/girlfriend tried to call you all last night. Explain to him/her where you were.
19. Explain to your landlord why you can't pay the rent on time.
20. Explain how to cook something easy yet impressive.
21. Explain how to drive a stick shift to someone who has only driven an automatic.
22. Explain how to do something difficult but make it look easy.
23. Explain how to study for a test.
24. Your friend has trouble saving money. Explain how to budget money so that your friend can save.
25. Explain how to clean the house quickly.
26. Explain to your friend how to buy a used car.
27. Explain to your friend how to find an apartment.
28. Explain to your friend how to make new friends in a foreign country.
29. Explain to your friend the steps that are involved in learning English.
30. Explain to your friend the things you must do if you want to get along with a roommate.
31. Your friend hasn't been feeling very well. Explain how he/she could take better care of himself/herself.
32. Explain how to furnish an apartment inexpensively.

33. Explain to your friend how he/she could make his/her own wardrobe seem larger by buying accessories.
34. Explain to your friend how to take better care of his/her car.
35. Explain the steps involved in getting married in your country.
36. Explain to your friend how to stay physically fit.
37. Explain to your friend the steps involved in learning how to drive.

Famous People

1. Talk to the President of the United States. Tell him that you disagree with the way he is handling the nation.
2. Talk to the leader of your country. Find out what some of his goals for your country are.
3. Talk to Mahatma Gandhi about world peace.
4. Tell Adolf Hitler that you disagree with his practices.
5. Thank Alexander Graham Bell for the telephone. Tell him how useful it has become.
6. Ask Sally Ride (the first woman in space) how she feels about the American woman.
7. Talk to John F. Kennedy. Ask him who he thinks assassinated him.
8. Talk to Martin Luther King, Jr. Ask him why he thinks he was killed.
9. Ask Anita Bryant (an American singer who spoke out publicly against homosexuality) why she feels that homosexuality is wrong.

10. Talk to the leader of MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers). Ask her what suggestion she has for keeping drunks off the road.
11. Tell Boy George (popular rock singer who dresses like a woman) that you think his clothes are terrible.
12. Introduce yourself to Germaine Greer (leader in the women's movement). Ask her about her ideas on the equality of the sexes.
13. Talk to John McEnroe. Tell him that you think he should try to be a better sport when he loses.
14. Talk to Louise Brown (the first test tube baby). Find out how she feels about artificial insemination..
15. Ask Albert Einstein why he had so much trouble in school.
16. Talk to the leader of a Pro-Life group. Find out why he/she is against abortion.
17. Tell the leader of the Ku Klux Klan that blacks and whites should be treated equally.
18. Ask Michael Jackson what it's like to be a superstar.
19. Tell Dr. Sigmund Freud that you've been having some problems lately.
20. Tell Ralph Nader that you think the work he does is very beneficial to the consumer in America.
21. Ask the Mayor of New York what it's like to be the mayor of such a great city.
22. Ask the Secretary General of the U.N. if war is ever justified and, if so, what problems justify it?
23. Tell Yasser Arafat that you think the Palestinian Liberation Organization should stop using terrorist tactics.
24. Find out why Superman feels he must continually fight crime.
25. Ask Walter Mondale (Democratic nominee for President of the United States) why he chose a woman, Geraldine Ferarro, as his running mate.
26. Ask the leader of the Soviet Union if he feels there will be a nuclear war.
27. Ask Don Juan why he has so many girlfriends.

28. Ask the leader of the Gay Rights movements what he thinks of Jerry Falwell, the leader of the Moral Majority (anti-gay organization).
29. Talk to George Washington (the first President of the United States). Find out what he thinks will become of the U.S.
30. Ask the Pope what he thinks has happened to religion in our society.
31. Ask Colonel Sanders (founder of the Kentucky Fried Chicken chain) how he got started in the chicken business.
32. Ask Mick Jagger what he thinks the reasons for his continued popularity are.
33. Tell Mohammed Ali that you think he is the greatest fighter in the world.
34. Ask Golda Meir if she thinks there will ever be peace in the Middle East.

Health

1. You are visiting a friend who is in the hospital. He/she is seriously ill. Talk to him/her.
2. Your friend is in the hospital. Ask the doctor how your friend is doing.
3. You feel sick. Ask your friend if he/she thinks you should go to a doctor.
4. You are in the hospital. You are worried because you are going to have an operation. Talk to the nurse about it.
5. You go to the hospital because you are not feeling very well. You have been waiting a long time. Ask the receptionist how much longer it will be.
6. You are in the hospital. Talk to the person in the next bed.

7. You have been very nervous lately. Ask your doctor if he/she can give you some tranquilizers.
8. One of your children may be homosexual and you are worried about his/her health. Ask your doctor for advice on how to discuss this with your child.
9. You have had a runny nose, sore throat, and muscle aches for several weeks. The doctor told you it was nothing. Talk to the doctor again and explain that you think it is more serious.
10. You go to the dentist because you have a bad toothache. The dentist tells you he is going to pull your tooth. Explain to him/her that you would like to get a second opinion before he/she does anything.
11. The dentist tells you that the work he/she needs to do is going to be very expensive. Find out if you can pay in installments.
12. Your friend is very sick but refuses to go to the doctor's. Go to the doctor yourself and explain the situation.
13. You are scheduled to have an operation. You are in your hospital room and the patient next to you tells you that your doctor has had several "accidents" involving operations recently.
14. Your doctor tells you that you need to have an operation. You don't want to have it. Talk to him/her.
15. Your best friend needs ho have an operation. He/she does not want it. Talk to him/her.
16. You just hurt yourself playing soccer. Ask your friend to help you to the hospital.
17. A friend of your family's is in the hospital. Visit him/her.
18. You are going bald. Ask your doctor to prescribe something to help you.

Introductions/Invitations/Farewells

1. Introduce yourself to your classmate.
2. You start a conversation with a stranger at the beach.
3. You meet a classmate at a cafe in town.
4. Ask a friend to go with you to the movies.
5. Ask a classmate to go out with you for a drink.
6. Ask your classmate to meet you after class so that you can study together.
7. Introduce yourself to your new roommate.
8. You see someone sitting alone in the cafeteria. Ask him/her if you can join him/her.
9. Introduce yourself to your classmate. Find out about him/her.
10. Ask a man/woman in the class to go out with you on a date.
11. You see someone sitting alone at the bus stop. Introduce yourself to him/her.
12. Introduce yourself to someone you think is also studying at this school.
13. Introduce your boyfriend/girlfriend to your mother.
14. Introduce your date to your father.
15. You are in a hurry but you see a classmate who you would really like to get to know. Tell the classmate this and arrange to meet him/her at a later time.
16. Introduce your sister to your best friend.
17. Introduce your teacher to your wife/husband.
18. Introduce your friend to your roommate.
19. Introduce yourself to your partner and find out about your partner's family.
20. Introduce someone from your native country to an American friend.
21. Introduce yourself to the head of the English program.
22. Introduce yourself to a new employee of your company.
23. Introduce yourself to your new host family.

24. Your parents are visiting you from their native country. Introduce them to your friend.
25. Introduce your boyfriend/girlfriend to your roommate.
26. Introduce yourself to your new neighbor.
27. You are leaving the country. Thank your teacher for all the help he/she has given you.
28. Say goodbye to a good friend of yours who is returning to his/her native country.
29. There is a family crisis at home and you must return immediately. Say goodbye to your host family.
30. You are going back to your country. Say goodbye to someone you dated here in the U.S.
31. A close friend of yours has to return to his/her country because of family problems. Say goodbye to him/her.
32. Say goodbye to a close friend of yours whom you think you will never see again.
33. Say goodbye to a close friend of yours whom you feel you will probably meet again.
34. You have just been to a very enjoyable party. Thank your host for inviting you and say goodbye.
35. Your friends have thrown you a going away party. They want you to make a speech. Thank them all for everything they have done to make your stay in this country enjoyable.
36. Say goodbye to your parents. You are going on a trip and may not return for a long time.
37. Say goodbye to your classmate. Plan a meeting in one year's time.
38. Tell your classmate about your new apartment. Invite your friends over.
39. You are at a party. Introduce yourself to a new student. Tell him/her about the language program in which you are currently enrolled.
40. Introduce yourself to a new student. Explain that there is nothing to worry about and that he/she will feel comfortable soon.

41. You are at a school party. Tell the host/hostess that the food is delicious. Talk about your favorite kinds of food.
42. You are at a party. You see someone from your class sitting alone. Go over and talk to your classmate about your native countries.
43. You have heard from a friend that a classmate of yours is having trouble in English. Ask this person if you can help.

Parent-Child Problems

1. Your son/daughter is having problems at school. Discuss this with the teacher.
2. Your son/daughter is having trouble with his/her schoolwork. Discuss this with him/her.
3. You feel your child is hanging around with the wrong kind of crowd. Talk to your husband/wife about it.
4. You are afraid that your child is taking drugs. Discuss this with your child.
5. Your daughter is a freshman at college. She wants to go away for the weekend with her boyfriend. She wants your permission. Talk to her.
6. Your father thinks it is time for you to get married. Talk to him.
7. Your mother wants you to meet a man whose family she knows. You don't want to meet him. Tell your mother this.
8. Your mother met a woman at the hairdresser's. She wants you to call the woman because she has a son/daughter your age. What do you say?
9. Tell your mother/father that you have decided to marry someone who is 20 years older than you are.

10. Your child just got his/her driver's license and wants to borrow the family car. What do you say?
11. Your 17 year old child has a 12 midnight curfew. He/she feels this is ridiculous. Discuss this.
12. Tell your father/mother that you have decided to get married.
13. You are 16 years old and you want to be an actor. Your father wants you to take over his business. Talk to your dad.
14. You want to quit school and start work, but your parents feel it is important to finish high school. Talk to them.
15. Your parents want you to go to college but you do not want to go. Talk to them about this.
16. Your child has very good grades and wants to go to college. You feel that you cannot afford to send him/her. Tell your child this.
17. You are 16 and you want to get married to your girlfriend/boyfriend. Tell your parents this.
18. Tell your mother/father that you think you are pregnant/your girlfriend is pregnant.
19. Tell your mother/father that you smashed the family car.
20. Ask your parents to lend you some money to buy a car.
21. Complain to your best friend about your parents.
22. You are 16 and you feel you should be able to go out on dates. Your parents feel you are still too young. Discuss this.
23. Tell your son/daughter to go out and start looking for a job.
24. Ask you child to help pay for household expenses.
25. Ask your child to help with the housework.
26. Tell your son/daughter that you do not like his/her girlfriend/boyfriend.
27. Tell your mother/father that you think you are homosexual.
28. Tell your parents that you want to move out of the house.

29. Tell your son/daughter that you do not like his/her attitude around the house.
30. Tell your child that you and your spouse are getting a divorce.
31. Explain to your child that your spouse has left the house and may not return.

Restaurants

1. Tell your waitress that the drink she has just served you has no alcohol in it. Ask her to take it back and bring you another.
2. You are a waitress/waiter in a busy restaurant. One of your customers keeps calling you over and changing his/her order.
3. You are seated at a table in a very elegant restaurant. The man sitting at the next table is eating noisily and disturbing you. Ask the hostess of the restaurant if you can have your table changed.
4. You are eating dinner alone. At the next table a man is winking at you and bothering you. Tell him to stop.
5. You have just finished your meal at the restaurant. Your waiter brings the check, but your realize you don't have enough money with you to pay the bill.
6. Your waitress/waiter brought you the wrong order. Tell him/her to take it back.
7. You ordered Steak Tartar thinking it would be cooked steak. Explain to the waiter/waitress that you cannot eat meat unless it is cooked.

8. You are in an airplane and the flight attendant brings you your meal. It has meat in it, and you are a strict vegetarian. Explain why you can't eat it.
9. One of your customers wants to change his/her order. You must pay for any order that is not eaten. Explain to the customer that he/she must eat what you have brought.
10. Your waiter/waitress trips and drops the tray on your head. You are covered with food. Tell the waiter/waitress that he is responsible for your clothes.
11. Your roommate takes you to a Japanese restaurant for your birthday. Explain to your friend that you hate Japanese food.
12. You ordered your steak rare, but your waitress/waiter brought you one well-done. Tell him/her to take it back.
13. You are walking to your table. Accidentally, you hit someone's arm and he/she spills hot coffee all over you.
14. Tell the waiter/waitress that there are smokers in the non-smoking section.
15. You are waiting for a table at a restaurant. The host/hostess is not paying attention to your group and is letting others in ahead of you. Tell the host/hostess that this is unfair.
16. You are in a very elegant restaurant. The waiter/waitress brings you the bill, and you see that he/she has overcharged you fifty dollars.
17. You were supposed to meet your friends for dinner an hour ago. Find out from the waiter/waitress if anyone has seen your friend.
18. You are the waiter/waitress at a restaurant. One of the customers is being rude to you.
19. You are sitting at the bar in a restaurant. You leave your jacket on the back of the chair and go to the restroom. When you return, someone is sitting in your seat. Speak to him/her.
20. You taste your food and it is the worst you have ever eaten. Tell the waitress/waiter.

21. You are the waitress at a fancy restaurant. One of your male customers is making advances. Tell him to leave you alone.
22. You are on your first date with someone you really like. After finishing dinner, your date puts down half the cost of the two dinners. You didn't bring enough money to pay for your meal. Explain this to your date.

Roommates

1. Your roommate always plays the stereo loudly when you are trying to sleep. Talk to him/her about it.
2. Your roommate gets up in the middle of the night and starts cooking a big meal. Talk to him/her.
3. Your roommate always bring his/her friends into your apartment. You don't like his/her friends. Discuss this with your roommate.
4. Your roommate is watching your TV. For some reason it stops working. Tell him/her that he/she will have to get it repaired.
5. You are sure that you left your wallet on the kitchen table in your apartment. When you get home, it is gone. Ask your roommate about it.
6. Your roommate is not very neat and you are tired of picking up after him/her. Discuss the problem with your roommate.
7. Your roommate's boyfriend/girlfriend is spending a lot of time at your apartment. Tell your roommate that this bothers you.
8. You feel you and your roommate are no longer compatible. Ask him/her to move out.
9. You feel you are doing all the housecleaning. Talk to your roommate about this.

10. You would like your roommate to move out of the apartment because you want your boyfriend/girlfriend to move in. Tell your roommate your plans.
11. Your mother called last night and your roommate was rude to her. She was very upset when you spoke to her. Talk to your roommate about this.
12. Your roommate always leaves the lights on in your apartment because he/she is afraid of the dark. Explain that your electric bills are getting too high.
13. Your roommate is always on the telephone when you need to make a call. Talk to him/her about this.
14. Your roommate keeps marijuana in his/her room. Explain to him/her that this is dangerous and illegal for both of you.
15. You cook dinner and your roommate washes the dishes every night. You have been finding that the dishes are not clean. Tell him/her about this.
16. Tell your roommate that you have found another apartment for yourself and you want to move out.
17. Ask your roommate to stop eating all your food in the refrigerator.
18. Your roommate has a pet that you are constantly cleaning up after. Tell your friend to either start caring for the pet or get rid of it.
19. Your roommate thinks you should pay more rent because your room is bigger. You feel that you are both sharing the house, so the rent should be split equally. Discuss this.
20. Your roommate's friend wants to come and spend a few weeks with you in the apartment. You feel that the house will be too crowded and you want to have privacy. Tell your roommate that you do not like this.

Spouses

1. Tell your husband that you are tired of being a housewife.
2. Tell your husband that you feel he should help with the housework.
3. Tell your husband that you need a maid to do the housework.
4. Tell your husband/wife that you do not love him/her any more.
5. Tell your husband/wife that you are in love with his/her best friend.
6. Tell your husband/wife to go out and find a job.
7. You want to have a child but your husband/wife does not.
8. You want to adopt a child, but your mother thinks you and your spouse should keep trying to have one of your own. Talk to your mother.
9. Tell your mate that you want to join the army.
10. Tell your mate that you think it is time that you moved to another city.
11. Tell your spouse that you do not want your mother-in-law interfering with your lives any more.
12. Tell your wife that she does not cook very good meals.
13. Tell your husband that you think you are pregnant.
14. Tell your spouse that you would like to take a vacation alone.
15. Tell your mate that you would like to go out more.
16. Tell your husband/wife that you think he/she should find a higher paying job.
17. Tell your husband/wife that he/she spends too much money on clothes.
18. Tell your spouse to stop watching the TV and do some work around the house.
19. Tell your spouse that you would like to get a pet.

20. Your husband wants to stay home and watch the children and feels that you should go out and work. Discuss this problem.
21. Your husband wants you to stay home and take care of the house, but you want to get a job. Discuss this.
22. Tell your husband/wife that he/she snores at night and you cannot get to sleep.
23. Your wife is pregnant. She is frightened because she feels the two of you do not have enough financial security to have a baby right now. Talk to her.
24. You are pregnant. Your husband wants you to find out if you are going to have a boy or a girl. If it is a girl, he wants you to have an abortion. You would be happy with any normal baby. Talk to him about this.
25. You want your husband to go with you to natural childbirth classes. He doesn't want to go. Talk about it.
26. Your wife wants to go live with her mother immediately following the baby's birth. You don't want her to go away.
27. Tell your friend that your wife is pregnant.
28. Tell your mother that you are pregnant.
29. Talk to your spouse about adopting a child.
30. Your husband wants you to have your baby back in your native country. Tell him you want to stay in the U.S.
31. Your wife wants to have her baby in the house. Convince her that it will be better if she goes to a hospital.
32. Tell your husband/wife that you are going out with your friends and he/she should stay at home and watch the children.
33. Tell your husband/wife that you are going out with your single friends for a night on the town.
34. You want to have a daughter, but your husband/wife would prefer a son. Talk about it.
35. Decide on a name for your soon-to-be child.
36. Your wife/husband is very jealous about your new secretary. Talk about it.
37. You forgot your anniversary.

38. Your wife is having a baby. Talk to another expectant father at the hospital.
39. Find out what your husband/wife wants for his/her birthday without letting him/her know that you are planning to get a present.
40. Tell your partner why you feel you have an "ideal" marriage.

Telephone

1. Call up a person whose phone number you got from a friend. Invite him/her to the movies.
2. Call your boyfriend/girlfriend in your country. Tell him/her that you miss him/her.
3. Call your family in your native country. Tell them what you have been doing.
4. Call you family in your country and tell them that you need more money.
5. Call the telephone company. Tell them there is something wrong with your telephone.
6. You are miserable in the U.S. Call your family and ask them if they think you should return home.
7. You smell smoke in your house. Call the fire department.
8. Call the police and tell them you have been robbed.
9. You have a toothache. Call your dentist and make an appointment. Even though the dentist is very busy, explain that this is an emergency.
10. Your doctor is going on vacation tomorrow. You have been very ill all day. Call him/her and ask him/her to try to see you today.

11. Telephone your friend. Ask him/her how she is doing.
12. Call your friend and tell him/her that you are very sorry but can't come to the party.
13. Call a classmate and ask him/her to tell you what you did in class the day before. Explain that you were sick and ask your friend to explain the homework to you.
14. You have just found out that a good friend of yours in your native country just had a baby. Call your friend to congratulate him/her.
15. Your brother/sister has just got engaged. Call him/her and congratulate him/her.
16. You have been invited to a good friend's wedding in your native country. You will be unable to attend. Call your friend and tell him/her this.
17. Call your family and wish them a happy holiday.
18. You just got a letter from your girlfriend/boyfriend in your native country. He/she says that his/her feelings toward you have changed. Call your friend and discuss this.
19. Call your best friend in your native country and ask him/her to visit you.
20. You want to buy tickets to a concert. Call the telephone number of the theater and find out more information.
21. You are supposed to meet a friend of yours for dinner but will be unable to make it. Call the restaurant and ask them if they can find your friend and give him/her a message for you.
22. Call a favorite teacher of yours and tell him/her what you have been doing in the U.S.
23. You are looking for an apartment. Call and inquire about one you saw in an ad.
24. You are looking for a job. Call about one you saw listed in the paper.
25. You are looking for a used car. Call the number you found in the paper offering one at a good price.
26. You want to stay in the U.S. and study but your family wants you to return. Call them and ask them to permit you to stay.

27. Call the operator and tell him/her that you are having trouble placing a call.
28. Call the cable TV company and ask them about installing a cable in your house.
29. Call the telephone business number and tell them that you think they made an error on your last bill.
30. Make a collect call from a public telephone booth.
31. You telephone your friend but the person answering the phone is very difficult to understand.
32. Call about an ad you found in the paper. It said, "Make new friends and meet hundreds of new people."
33. Your toilet doesn't work. Call a plumber.
34. Call your sister. Congratulate her on her new baby.
35. Someone in your friend's family has just died. Call your friend and tell him/her that you are very sorry.
36. Call your friend and congratulate him/her on getting engaged.

Telling the Truth

1. You are a doctor. A woman has been trying to become pregnant for ten years. She is 45 years old. You think the woman might die if she has a child. What do you say to her?
2. A good friend of yours had just cut her hair. You think she looks awful. What do you tell her?
3. You are pregnant and only 15 years old. You are very unhappy and feel that your parents would be extremely angry if they found out. Talk to your mother.
4. Your best friend has decided to get married. You don't like the person your friend has chosen. What do you say to your friend?

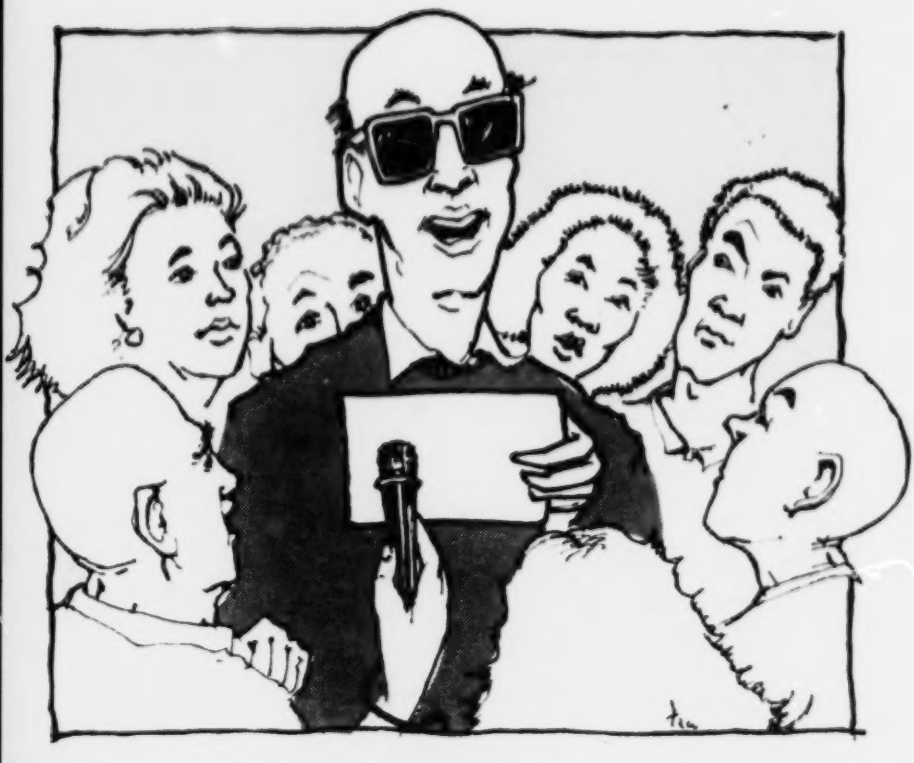
5. You are 16 years old. You've just gotten your driver's license. Your insurance has not taken effect yet. You borrow your parent's car and accidentally hit a parked car. No on sees you. Talk to your father.
6. You have been dating someone for two years. The night before you got drunk and spent the night with your friend's best friend. What do you tell your girlfriend/boyfriend?
7. Your husband beats you, but with eight children, he is your only means of financial support. Your mother comes over to visit you and asks you why you are bruised. What is your reply?
8. You have made your girlfriend pregnant and you are very upset. Your parents are very conservative but they see you are unhappy. Your father asks you what is wrong.
9. Your wife has just become pregnant and the two of you are extremely happy. A good friend of yours has been trying to become pregnant for several years. She meets you in the street. What do you say to her?
10. The doctor tells you one of your parents is terminally ill. Your parent asks you what his/her condition is. Talk to him/her.
11. You and your wife have been married for five years. you have been very happy but lately you have begun to feel very attracted towards another woman. Your wife asks you if anything is wrong. What do you say?
12. You are a teenager and you occasionally smoke marijuana. Your parent finds a small joint in your room. He/she asks you where it came from. What do you say?
13. You have been dating your girlfriend for two years. Just recently you have begun to feel attracted towards men. Talk to your girlfriend.
14. You are taking a test and realize that the person sitting next to you is copying from your paper. What do you do?
15. Your friend bought you a birthday present that you do not like. What do you say?
16. Your roommate has just done some yard work and has destroyed some of your favorite plants. He/she comes to you and tells you about the great job he/she has done. What do you say?

17. Your mother tells you that she has a very nice person she wants you to go out with. You have a date with this person, but you feel he/she is ugly. Your mother asks you how the date went. What do you reply?
18. Some children are throwing rocks at a window. One of the children breaks it, but another is blamed. You have see the whole thing. Talk to the adult who blamed the wrong child.

Travel

1. Your brother/sister has just returned from a trip. Ask him/her about it.
2. You are at the airport ticket counter. You need to buy a ticket immediately to go back to your native country. Talk to the person at the counter.
3. You are thinking about taking a trip. Ask your friend where he/she thinks you should go.
4. Try to convince your friend to take a vacation with you somewhere.
5. You would like to take a trip to one of your classmates' countries. Ask your friend if you could stay at his/her house there.
6. Go to the travel agency. Ask an agent for information on tours. Ask the agent if he/she can get you a package deal including hotel, meals, and transportation.
7. Ask your friend to tell you about the best trip he/she ever took.
8. Plan a trip with your best friend. Decide on how long you can stay, where you will go and how much money you will need.
9. Ask the hotel manager where in the city he/she thinks you should go for sightseeing.

10. You lose all of your traveler's checks. Go to a bank that sells the checks and tell them this.
11. You are at customs and you can't find your passport. Explain to the officials that you think it might have been stolen.
12. You have forgotten to get a visa to come back into the U.S. Explain to the officials at the border that you are a student studying English in the U.S.
13. Tell the manager of a hotel that you think someone has been in your room.
14. You think you have been overcharged for your hotel room. Speak to the hotel manager about this.
15. You purchased a plane ticket at a travel agency. When you got home you realized it was made out for the wrong date. Tell the agent this.
16. Ask your boss if you can take some time off and go on vacation.
17. Ask your girlfriend/boyfriend to take some time off from work and take a vacation with you.
18. Ask your friend where he/she usually goes on vacation, and why.
19. You have just gotten off a plane and you are looking for your carry-on bag. You had put it in the overhead compartment, and now it isn't there. Tell the agent about your problem.



Interviews

The interview is based on a list of questions that can be used to draw out a wide variety of information, personal experience, and opinions.

Procedures

1 Two students come to the front of the room and speak for three minutes about the question on the card. One student initiates the interview with the question; the second responds. The interviewer can ask additional questions to elicit more information. The other students listen and monitor the mistakes (see monitored conversation as described in the introduction).

2 Group the students into pairs and have them discuss a card for three to five minutes. Give each pair a different card. Then ask the students to pass the card to the pair on their left. This procedure is repeated until each group has spoken about the question on each card. Circulate around the room, listening in on each pair and marking any mistakes on the mistake cards. After all the interview cards have been completed, the students look at their mistake cards and correct them. Circulate to assist with correction.

3 Divide the students into two or three groups, appointing one student as the leader of the group. The leader reads the interview card aloud to the group and must make sure that each student participates. Give each leader several cards and have them discuss each card for a specified amount of time. Collect the mistake cards of each group, and as you visit the group, write the mistakes of the speaker. When the interview cards are completed, hand back each student's mistake cards, and ask the group to correct the mistakes together.

4 Place the students into groups of four. Two students speak about the interview card question, while the other two monitor the mistakes in their notebooks. Then the two who were monitoring speak about the topic, while the other two students monitor them. After both pairs have spoken, the students go over the mistakes that they found.

5 Have a group discussion of each interview card with no monitoring or correction. This can be done in pairs, small groups, or even a large classroom discussion. If some monitoring is desired, assign a few "monitors" whose job it is to record the mistakes of the students who speak.

6 As an introduction to each topic (or even, if desired, each interview card), write a question on the blackboard and ask the students to write their answers in a specified amount of time (five to fifteen minutes). Collect the students' papers and then divide the students into groups to discuss what they wrote.

7 As a follow-up, give a writing assignment after the cards have been discussed. If new vocabulary has been introduced, ask the students to use the new words or phrases. For variety, ask the students to write about another student's response.

Family

1. What are some unusual things about your family?
2. What makes your family typical?
3. Do you think it is better to be part of a large family or a small one? Why?
4. Is it better for a family to have a working mother or a mother who stays at home with the children?
5. What is the best way to punish a child?
6. How were you punished as a child?
7. Are there any forms of punishment that you would never implement?
8. Have you ever known anyone to physically abuse his/her children?
9. What kinds of toys would you prefer your child to play with?
10. What would be the ideal toy?
11. What was your favorite toy as a child?
12. Are there any toys that you would not permit your child to play with?
13. Do you think little girls and little boys should be treated differently?
14. Were you treated differently from a sibling of the opposite sex?
15. Do you think it is easier to be a father or a mother?
16. Whom do you think should be the head of the family?
17. Do you think grandparents have a positive or negative effect on the youngsters in a household?
18. Would you take in your aging father or mother?
19. Do you think you would put an aging parent into an old age home?
20. How many people constitute the ideal size family?

Laughter

1. What kinds of things do you laugh at?
2. Do you ever laugh at people who are physically or mentally handicapped? Why?
3. What kinds of jokes do you like?
4. Do you like slapstick comedy?
5. Who are your favorite comedians or comic strips?
6. Do you think you're funny? Why or why not?
7. Do others think you're funny? Why is that?
8. Do people in your country laugh at different things from people in this country?
9. How do you laugh? Are you inhibited or do you let go?
10. Is having a sense of humor important? Why or why not?
11. Why do you think some people laugh at others?
12. In what situations do you use laughter as an outlet? Does it help?
13. What kinds of people look funny to you?
14. What is the funniest movie you've ever seen?
15. Do you like watching American situation comedies?
16. Do you think women are funnier than men?
17. What are some funny things children do?
18. What are some funny things pets do?
19. Do you ever laugh out loud when you are alone?
20. Have you ever laughed so hard that you cried? When?

Men, Women and Children

1. Is it better to be married or single?
2. What is the best age for a person to get married?
3. What is the best age for parents to begin a family?
4. Do you think it is better to live with your girl-friend/boyfriend before marriage?
5. Why do you think so many couples are getting divorces nowadays?
6. Who should pay for a date, the man or the woman?
7. At what age do you think a child should be permitted to go out on a date?
8. At what age did you go out on your first date?
9. Do you think parents should be involved in choosing a mate for their children?
10. What is the best way for youths to find out about sex?
11. How did you learn about sex?
12. Are men and women different emotionally? How?
13. Do you think men and women should be treated equally in the job market?
14. Are men and women capable of performing the same jobs?
15. Do you get along better with men or women?
16. Which sex do you think is the most powerful?
17. Is there anything you dislike about the opposite sex?
18. Which to you think it's easier to be, a man or a woman?
19. Do you think a man should cry?
20. Do you like children? What qualities do you like?
21. What do you dislike about children?

Minorities

1. What are the stereotypes you have of people from other countries? How do you think stereotypes develop?
2. What do you think causes racial prejudice?
3. Were there any stereotypes you were brought up with as a child that have made you feel a certain way about a racial group?
4. What are the different minorities in your country? How are they perceived by the majority of the population?
5. Are there many business opportunities for minorities in your native country?
6. Is there racial prejudice in your country? Why do you think it exists?
7. Are there any organizations in your country that are bound together because of racial discrimination?
8. What kinds of discrimination exist in your country? Why?
9. Is there a "privileged" class in your country? Why?
10. Do any minorities in your country hold an elective office? Do any hold appointive office?
11. Do you think the U.S. could do anything to make black and white relations better? What?
12. Do you think we should have segregated schools? Do you agree or disagree with busing?
13. Do you think the U.S. will ever have a black president?
14. Are black and white Americans perceived in the same way in your native country? How are they perceived differently?
15. Do you think it is easier to be a white person or a black person in the U.S.?
16. Do you think there are any inborn differences between blacks and whites?
17. Why do you think the U.S. has so many racial problems?

18. Do you feel there is a difference between the African black and the American black?
19. Do you think it is easier to be a man or a woman?

Native Country

1. How does this city compare to your native city?
2. Why did you leave your native country to come here?
3. What are some interesting things about your native country?
4. What do you miss most about your native country?
5. What do you dislike about your native country?
6. Do you prefer living here or in your country?
7. Where do you think it is better to raise children, in your country or the U.S.?
8. Do you think people are friendlier in your country?
9. Whom do you miss the most from your country?
10. What do you think of the government in your country?
11. Are there any injustices in your country that you would like to see corrected? What are they?
12. What was your life like in your native country?

People

1. Who has helped you most in your life?
2. What characteristics make you dislike a person on sight?
3. Did you have a hero or idol as a child?
4. Is there anyone you admire a great deal?
5. What person who is not living has influenced your development?
6. Is there any one person that you could not possibly live without?
7. What famous person would you like to meet?
8. Is there anyone who is dead now that you would like to talk to? What would you like to say?
9. Do you have someone whom you confide in?
10. Is there any one person you really hate? Why?
11. Who is the greatest person who ever lived?
12. Who is the most powerful leader in the world?
13. Who influenced the course of history the most?
14. Were you ever really disappointed by someone?
15. Is there any one person in your life who inspired you to do something you thought you couldn't do?

Personal Data

1. Are you a day person or a night person?
2. What are your favorite pastimes, sports, and hobbies?
3. Do you prefer to work with people, data, or machines?
4. What is your favorite animal?
5. What are the most important qualities in a person?
6. How do you relax?
7. What are your pet peeves?
8. What are some things only a few people know about you?
9. What do you hate to do?
10. What do you love doing?
11. What is your favorite food?
12. What is your favorite type of movie?
13. Who is your favorite actor or actress?
14. What is something you know how to do really well?
15. Are you an optimist or a pessimist?
16. What is your favorite color?
17. How would you describe yourself?
18. What is your favorite type of music?
19. Why are you studying English?
20. What part of nature do you like most?
21. Do you prefer living near the ocean or the mountains?
22. Do you take good care of yourself? How?
23. How do you make yourself fall asleep? In what position are you the most comfortable?
24. Do you belong to any clubs or organizations?
25. Do you ever talk to yourself? What do you say?
26. Are you a jealous person?
27. What are some things which make you angry?

28. What makes you happy?
29. What is your favorite day of the week?
30. What is the most productive time of the day for you?
31. What is your favorite holiday?

Personal Values

1. What is the one thing you would like to change about yourself?
2. What are some of the things you really believe in?
3. What are the necessities of life?
4. How important is money to you?
5. Do you think there is such a thing as "love?"
6. Are you satisfied with your life?
7. How important for you is it to work hard?
8. Is religion important to you?
9. What are the things you want most in life?
10. What is one important thing you would like to accomplish in your life?
11. What is it that you think your friends like about you?
12. How would you like to be remembered?
13. What is the one thing that you would hope you could continue throughout your life?
14. Do you have a personal motto that you try to live by?
15. What is the most important scientific advancement in history?
16. What is the most important invention?

17. What has been your greatest problem?
18. What has been your greatest achievement?
19. If you had to choose between blindness and deafness, which would you choose? Why?
20. Would you want to know the exact date and time of your own death?
21. How do you want to die?

Personal Experience

1. What difficult choice have you had to make? Do you feel now that you made the right decision?
2. What have you done in your free time that you enjoyed the least? Why did you do this?
3. Where did you spend your best vacation?
4. Is there any special place that you used to go to as a child to escape those around you?
5. Have you ever made a choice that surprised everyone you knew?
6. Have you ever been really ashamed of something that you did?
7. Have you ever been embarrassed by something a friend did?
8. Have you ever told a lie that you couldn't get out of?
9. Have you ever had an encounter with the police?
10. Is there anything that you "learned the hard way?"
11. Is there anything that you tried at one time that you will never try again?

12. Is there some smell, taste, or sound that reminds you of something you knew as a child?
13. Do you have a recurring dream?
14. Have you ever experienced deja vu?
15. Can you remember a nightmare you had?

Politics

1. What do you think of the American form of government?
2. Are you a conservative or a liberal?
3. What country do you think has the best form of government?
4. Do you think the United States will ever have a woman president?
5. Are there any injustices in your country that you would like to see corrected?
6. What are some of the injustices that you are aware of in the United States?
7. Is there much difference between a Republican and a Democrat?
8. Are political parties necessary?
9. Do you think politics should be discussed in schools?
10. What is your idea of a perfect society?
11. Do you think we will have a third world war?
12. Do you think man is violent by nature?

13. What do you think can be done to prevent a nuclear war?
14. Do you think that the United States should have gone to the Olympics in Moscow?
15. Do you think the U.S.S.R. was wrong in not coming to the Olympics in Los Angeles in 1984?

School/Work

1. How would you teach this class differently?
2. Do you like to study?
3. What was your favorite subject in school?
4. Did you like school as a child?
5. What are the most important qualities in a good teacher?
6. What characteristics do you dislike in a teacher?
7. What is the most effective way for you to study?
8. Is there something you learned as a child that you find totally useless now?
9. How important do you think a college education is nowadays?
10. Do you think children get more of an education inside the classroom or outside with their friends?
11. How much should a parent teach the child in the home?
12. Do you think certain things should not be taught in school? Why?
13. What kinds of jobs do you enjoy?
14. What kind of skill do you wish you had learned?

15. Do you continue working at something or do you easily get frustrated?
16. How do you deal with the unpleasant aspects of work or school?

Television

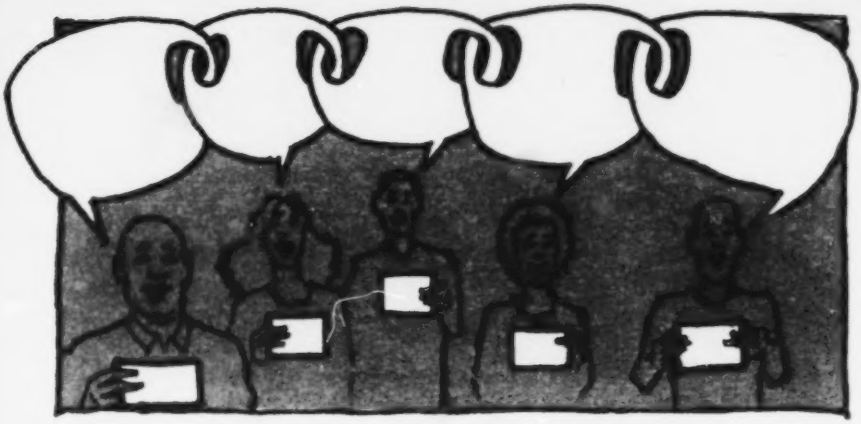
1. What are the positive and negative effects of television on children?
2. Do you think that our present rating system for movies is good. Why or why not?
3. What do you think of American commercials?
4. Do you think commercials should be permitted on children's TV shows? What kind of commercials would be appropriate?
5. Do TV programs present a realistic picture of American life? Why or why not?
6. Do you think television is an effective babysitter?
7. Should children have restricted use of the TV set?
8. Should each member of a family have a TV set? How would this benefit the household? In what ways would it harm a family?
9. Are TV shows better or worse in your country?
10. How important is watching television in another language when you are studying that language?
11. How much TV do you watch in your native country? How does this compare to the amount you watch in the United States?
12. What kind of shows do you watch here in the United States?
13. What kind of TV shows do you dislike? Why?

14. Do you usually sit through commercials? If not, what do you do at these times?
15. Do you believe that commercials are showing you the truth?
16. How can we change American TV so that we can get more benefits from it?

What If

1. If you could be anyone in the world, who would you be?
2. If you could be doing anything right now, what would you want to do?
3. If you had been tall/short, how would your life have been different?
4. If you had been a fat/thin child, how would your life have been different?
5. If you were rich, how would your life be different?
6. If you could be any age, what age would you be?
7. If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you choose to live?
8. If you could have anything you wanted, what would you ask for?
9. If you could change one thing about yourself, what would that be?
10. If you were still in your native country, how would your life be different?
11. If you were teaching this class, how would you change it?
12. If you could do one thing to change the world, what would you do?

13. If you had been born a man/woman, how would your life have been different?
14. If you had been born poor, how would your life have been different?
15. If you could bring one person back to life, who would that be?
16. If you could live forever, would you choose to do so?
17. If you could change one thing about someone else, who would you change and what would you change about that person?
18. If you could meet a famous person, who would you want to meet?
19. If you could live in any time period (past, present, future), when would you want to live?
20. If you could learn one skill, what would that be?
21. If you could create the perfect world, what kind of world would it be?
22. If you could create the perfect mate, what kind of person would that be?
23. If you had three wishes, what would you ask for?



Chain Stories

The class invents a story, using a chain story card as the opening line. This activity stimulates creative thinking and expression.

Procedures

1. Give one card to a student who reads it and completes the sentence. The next student continues the story, making it up as he goes along. The third student continues the story and so on. End the story by calling "time" after three to five minutes.

2. Each student can make up his own story and present it to the class.

3. The students can work in pairs, alternating sentences to complete the story.

4. Use procedure 1 but also give a secret word to each student. At some time during the story, the student must use that word. After the story is completed, each student must guess what the others' secret words were.

5. Each student can write his own story. This can be done under the pressure of a time limitation to encourage creativity and spontaneity, or it can be done without a time limit to work on accuracy of expression.

Stories

1. One day I decided to take a bus as far as it went.
2. One day I decided to go windsurfing for the first time.
3. One day I woke up late.
4. One day I forgot to do my homework.
5. One day I saw a beautiful girl.
6. One day I was walking on some very slippery ice.
7. One day I decided to take a walk in the park.
8. One day I was taking a walk and saw some smoke.
9. One day I had a big fight with my best friend.
10. One day I woke up and thought it was Sunday.
11. One day I decided to do something totally out of character.
12. One day I decided to visit someone I hadn't seen in a long, long time.
13. One day I decided to take a trip somewhere.
14. One day I wanted to do something unique.
15. One day I decided to dress up as somebody else.
16. One day I decided to buy something that was alive.
17. One day I decided not be honest with anyone for the whole day.
18. One day I decided to show the world how I really felt.
19. One day I decided to take a chance.
20. One day I decided to be aggressive.
21. One day I decided to make some trouble.
22. One morning I woke up and realized I was alive.
23. One night I decided to go exploring.
24. One day I was riding in my car and found that I had no brakes.
25. One day I was taking a walk when I heard a scream.

26. One day I opened my door and looked down and saw a tiny baby.
27. One day I decided to visit a prison.
28. One day I was riding my bike when I saw a fantastic sight.
29. One day I woke up and realized I was in love.
30. One day I just started walking.
31. One day I just felt like screaming the whole day.
32. One day I realized I was alone in this world.
33. One day I wanted to do all the things that I had always been afraid of doing.
34. One day I wanted to tell everybody the truth about what I thought of them.
35. One day I ran out of gas in the middle of nowhere.
36. One day I decided to run away.
37. One day I was walking along and it started to rain.
38. One day I heard a strange noise.
39. One day I thought I saw a ghost.
40. One day I just couldn't sleep.

Talks

The topics in this activity stimulate self-expression. The first three topics require the students to talk about themselves, share personal experiences, and express hopes, fears, and opinions. The comparison topics are less personal and can be used to stimulate factual and intellectual expression.

Procedures

1 Each student chooses a card. Then pair up the students and give each pair about 15-20 minutes to talk about their cards in free conversation. Questions are encouraged, as well as expansion of the topic through other related experiences. After this is completed, instruct one student in each pair to speak for three to five minutes on his card, while the other student times and monitors the errors. When this is completed, the other student speaks and the procedure is reversed. Finally, call up each student to speak on his card in front of the class for three to five minutes. During the talks, write the mistakes on the student's mistake cards. After each student speaks, encourage the other students to ask questions as well as relate their own experiences. Correction of errors can be done following the class discussion.

2 Have the students prepare their talks for homework. They should make some notes to help them with their presentations. They can practice in class with a partner who will monitor the mistakes before the presentations are given to the entire class.

3 These topics can be used as a writing assignment before or after they have been used in class.

Comparisons

1. Compare this country with your native country.
2. Compare two military leaders.
3. Compare being single and being married.
4. Compare two different fruits.
5. Compare World War II and the Vietnam War.
6. Compare men and women.
7. Compare famous people and not famous people.
8. Compare two presidents of the United States.
9. Compare the politics of the United States with the politics of your country.
10. Compare life nowadays with life twenty years ago.
11. Compare your mother with your father.
12. Compare your two sets of grandparents.
13. Compare rock music and classical music.
14. Compare capitalism and socialism.
15. Compare flowers with weeds.
16. Compare living alone with living with someone.
17. Compare doctors and patients.
18. Compare fingers and toes.
19. Compare a hand and a foot.
20. Compare comedy and tragedy.
21. Compare life and death.
22. Compare the moon and the sun.
23. Compare a professional with a manual laborer.
24. Compare children with parents.
25. Compare jeans and a T-shirt to formal attire.
26. Compare a cat and a dog.
27. Compare writing and reading.
28. Compare poverty and greed.
29. Compare two sports.
30. Compare two academic subjects.

31. Compare two of your friends.
32. Compare two people you do not like.
33. Compare two of your teachers.
34. Compare loneliness and being alone.
35. Compare two different tastes.
36. Compare two holidays.
37. Compare the culture in the United States to the culture in your native country.
38. Compare the topography of the United States to that of your native country.
39. Compare education in your native country to education in the United States.
40. Compare two movie stars.
41. Compare the prices in the United States to the prices in your native country.
42. Compare being in love and loving.
43. Compare your life now with what it was like ten years ago.
44. Compare your physical appearance now with the way you looked as a child.
45. Compare your thoughts on the United States before you came here with your present ideas.
46. Compare your living quarters in the United States to the living quarters you had in your native country.
47. Compare selfishness and selflessness.
48. Compare snow and ice.
49. Compare two seasons.
50. Compare two different loves.

Hopes, Fears and Opinions

1. Talk about your future plans or goals.
2. Tell us about what you hope for the world.
3. Talk about an exciting adventure you would like to have.
4. Talk about your biggest fear.
5. Tell us about the perfect mate.
6. Talk about your ideal country.
7. Talk about the biggest problem you are facing.
8. Talk about what you think people must do in order to live in peace.
9. Talk about a beautiful place.
10. Talk about the kind of life you hope you are living.
11. Tell us what you think love is.
12. Tell us what you think about the United Nations.
13. Tell us what you think the world will be like twenty years from now.
14. Talk about your country's biggest problems.
15. Tell us about the best and worst aspects of the United States.
16. Tell us how you feel about organized religion.
17. Tell us how we should deal with convicted criminals.

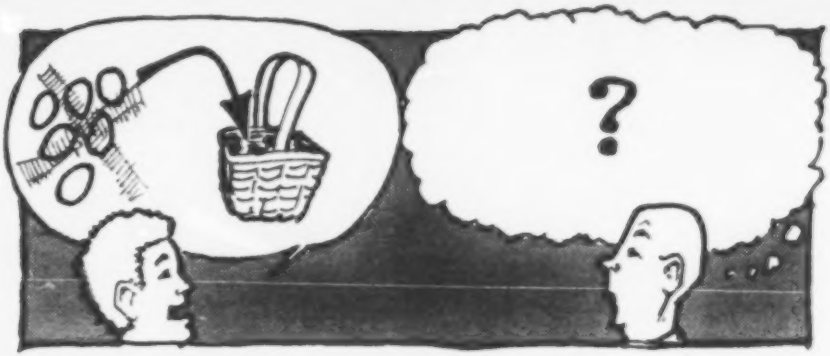
Personal Experiences

1. Talk about the first time you kissed someone of the opposite sex.
2. Talk about your last year in school in your native country.
3. Talk about one of the worst moments in your life.
4. Describe what happened on the day you left your native country.
5. Describe how you felt your first night in your apartment/house in the United States.
6. Describe an encounter you had with the police.
7. Talk about an experience when you hurt yourself physically.
8. Describe the best moment in your life.
9. Talk about your first boyfriend/girlfriend.
10. Describe how you felt your first day of language classes.
11. Talk about an important childhood experience.
12. Tell us about a frustrating experience.
13. Talk about a time when you had to make an important decision.
14. Talk about your last job.
15. Tell us about the last time you were embarrassed by someone or something.
16. Talk about the last trip you took.
17. Tell us about a time when you couldn't find something that was important.
18. Tell us about a dangerous experience you had.
19. Tell us about the last time you got into a fight.
20. Talk about your first infatuation.
21. Tell us about your last love affair.
22. Tell us about a childhood sweetheart.
23. Tell us about a time when you escaped.
24. Talk about the last time you told a big lie.

25. Talk about a funny experience.
26. Tell us about a time when you learned a lesson.
27. Tell us about a time when you saw a U.F.O.
28. Tell us about an experience that restored your faith in man.
29. Tell us about your last wild party.
30. Tell us about a time when you found out you were wrong.
31. Talk about a time when you felt cheated.
32. Talk about the problems you had in leaving your native country.
33. Tell us about someone or something that has changed your life.
34. Tell us about some experience which made you believe in fate.
35. Tell us about a vivid dream you had.

Self-Description

1. Tell us about your most valuable possession.
2. Talk about your favorite pastime.
3. Talk about someone you respect and admire.
4. Talk about the things you think about the most.
5. Tell us about your personal weakness.
6. Tell us about your greatest problem.
7. Tell us about your pet peeves.
8. Tell us about your character strengths.
9. Tell us what you think people like about you most.
10. Talk about a person you love.
11. Tell us about your favorite relative.
12. Talk about the things that mean the most to you.
13. Talk about your favorite movie star.
14. Talk about your family.
15. Talk about the kinds of movies you like.
16. Talk about your favorite hideaway.
17. Tell us about your favorite pet.
18. Talk about the things that make you happy.
19. Talk about a tradition in your country that is important to you.
20. Tell us about something in your native country that you really miss.
21. Talk about the importance of money in your life.
22. Talk about the importance of religion in your life.



Problems

Using proverbs and superstitions as a basis, the students work in pairs or small groups, talking with each other to arrive at a common understanding of the proverb or superstition.

Procedures

As an introduction to these topics, the students should write several proverbs and superstitions from their native countries with the English translation. Then the students can discuss proverbs and superstitions, giving examples from their own countries when appropriate.

1 Give a proverb or superstition card to a pair or small group of students. They must try to figure out the meaning of the proverb. They may then want to compare the English proverb to one of their country, and to give examples. With superstitions, the students can try to figure out how the superstition arose, and again, compare with those of their own countries.

2 Have the pairs of students pass their cards to the next pair and continue this procedure until everyone has discussed the cards. Then ask the students to discuss the proverbs or superstitions as a class and have all the students share the ideas touched on in the pairs.

3 For a writing assignment, have the students compare the similarities between their proverbs (or superstitions) and those of the United States.

Proverbs

1. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
2. A friend in need is a friend indeed.
3. A rolling stone gathers no moss.
4. A stitch in time saves nine.
5. A watched pot never boils.
6. A word to the wise is sufficient.
7. Absence makes the heart grow fonder.
8. All that glitters is not gold.
9. An apple a day keeps the doctor away.
10. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.
11. Beauty is as beauty does.
12. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.
13. Beauty is only skin deep.
14. Blood is thicker than water.
15. Boys will be boys.
16. Business before pleasure.
17. Cash on the barrelhead.
18. Children should be seen and not heard.
19. Cleanliness is next to godliness.
20. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
21. Don't bite off more than you can chew.
22. Don't bite the hand that feeds you.
23. Don't burn your bridges behind you.
24. Don't count your chickens before they hatch.
25. Don't cry over spilled milk.
26. Don't cut off your nose to spite your face.
27. Do as I say, not as I do.
28. Don't look a gift horse in the mouth.
29. Don't make a mountain out of a mole hill.

30. Don't put all your eggs in one basket.
31. Don't put the cart before the horse.
32. Every cloud has a silver lining.
33. Fight fire with fire.
34. Forgive and forget.
35. Good fences make good neighbors.
36. Grab the bull by the horns.
37. Haste makes waste.
38. He who hesitates is lost.
39. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.
40. His bark is worse than his bite.
41. Home is where the heart is.
42. If the shoe fits, wear it.
43. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em.
44. If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.
45. If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.
46. If you give him an inch, he'll take a mile.
47. It's better late than never.
48. Better to be safe than sorry.
49. Better to give than to receive.
50. It's better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all.
51. It's not whether you win or lose, but how you play the game.
52. It's not who you are; it's who you know.
53. It's quality, not quantity, that counts.
54. Keep a stiff upper lip.
55. Keep your nose to the grindstone.
56. Laugh and the world laughs with you; cry and you cry alone.
57. Lay your cards on the table.
58. Leave well enough alone.
59. Let sleeping dogs lie.

60. Let the chips fall where they may.
61. Let your conscience be your guide.
62. Life is not a bowl of cherries.
63. Look before you leap.
64. Love is blind.
65. Make hay while the sun shines.
66. Necessity is the mother of invention.
67. Nice guys/girls finish last.
68. One man's food is another man's poison.
69. One picture is worth a thousand words.
70. Patience is a virtue.
71. People in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.
72. Practice what you preach.
73. Put your best foot forward.
74. Rome wasn't built in a day.
75. Silence is golden.
76. Slow and steady wins the race.
77. Some people have all the luck.
78. Speak softly and carry a big stick.
79. Take the bull by the horns.
80. The grass is always greener on the other side.
81. The squeaky wheel always gets the grease.
82. The way to a man's heart is through his stomach.
83. There are plenty of fish in the sea.
84. There's more to it than meets the eye.
85. There's no time like the present.
86. The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.
87. Time and tide wait for no man.
88. Time is money.
89. Too many cooks spoil the broth.
90. Two wrongs don't make a right.
91. Variety is the spice of life.

92. Waste not, want not.
93. What's good for the goose is good for the gander.
94. When in Rome, do as the Romans do.
95. When it rains it pours.
96. When the cat's away the mice will play.
97. When the going gets tough, the tough get going.
98. Where there's smoke, there's fire.
99. You can attract more bees with honey than you can with vinegar.
100. You can't burn a candle at both ends.
101. You can't change a leopard's spots.
102. You can't fight city hall.
103. You can't have your cake and eat it too.
104. You can't teach an old dog new tricks.
105. You can't tell a book by its cover.
106. You get what you pay for.
107. You're never too old to learn.

Superstitions

1. Finding a four leaf clover is good luck.
2. The number seven is lucky.
3. A rabbit's foot is lucky.
4. A horseshoe is lucky.
5. Knocking on wood keeps good luck.

6. Touching a hunchback's hump is lucky.
7. Finding a penny heads-up is lucky.
8. If you make a wish on a falling star it will come true.
9. If you throw a coin into a pool of water and make a wish, it will come true.
10. If your nose itches, you should kiss a fool.
11. If your ears are burning, someone is talking about you.
12. Accidents happen in threes.
13. A widow's peak is a sign of beauty.
14. If you cross your fingers when lying, your lie will not count against you.
15. If you cross your fingers, you wish may come true.
16. Don't walk under a ladder.
17. If you spill salt, it's bad luck; throw some over your right shoulder.
18. An open umbrella in the house is unlucky.
19. It's bad luck when a black cat crosses your path.
20. Anything that has the number 13 is unlucky, especially Friday the 13th.
21. If you use a match to light three cigarettes it is unlucky.
22. Stepping on cracks can break your mother's back (it's unlucky).
23. A mirror face down is bad luck.
24. The Queen of Spades is bad luck.
25. If you break a mirror you will have seven years bad luck.

Discussions

These topics are generally controversial and lend themselves to discussion and debate, requiring the student to think about and express opinions in a group situation.

Procedures

1 Introduce and explain the topic so that everyone understands it. Go over some of the vocabulary that is associated with the topic. Ask each student to make an opening statement about the topic and then lead a discussion based on the opening statements, asking for clarification, elaboration, and agreement/disagreement.

2 Divide the students into two or three large groups. The students would then sit in a circle and place their mistake cards on a table near them. Assign a leader to each group. The leader reads the card to the group and makes sure all the students in the group speak. As the group is sharing ideas, circulate to the different groups and spot-record the mistakes heard. At the end of the discussion, the groups can exchange topics and once again, discuss while you monitor each group. At the end of the specified time, the students look at their mistake cards and correct the errors.

3 After introducing the topic, ask the class how many people agree with the card, and how many don't. The students can be divided into two groups which must prepare arguments either supporting or disputing the topic. Then have the groups debate the issue, or have only one or two representatives from the two groups discuss the topic. You may or may not wish to monitor mistakes.

4 Make partners with one student for and one against. Then time the pairs for ten minutes and have them discuss the issue. At the end of the time, ask each student if he has changed his attitude after talking to his partner.

5 The students can be asked to write their ideas about the topic, either before the discussion, as an introduction, or after the class discussion as a follow-up.

D-op

Opinions

1. Women belong at home taking care of children.
2. It is better not to have any children.
3. There should be no marriage laws.
4. Surrogate mothering should be outlawed.
5. Only weak people have psychiatric problems.
6. Men and woman are emotionally different.
7. Teachers should not socialize with students.
8. Life in the United States is very easy.
9. Children should never be hit.
10. Children in the United States do not respect their parents.
11. People in the United States are not very friendly.
12. Virginity is very important.
13. Women should be more aggressive.
14. Living together before marriage should be required.
15. Homosexuals are weak people.
16. Some people just can't learn another language.
17. Private schools are better than public schools.
18. The movie rating guide in the United States is not working.
19. People should not eat meat.
20. Foreign cars are better than American cars.
21. Classical music is superior to popular music.
22. Women who get raped usually deserve it.
23. Americans drink too much.
24. The nuclear family is falling apart.
25. Americans spend too much money on cosmetics.
26. Children get a better education outside the classroom.
27. There should be no tests in schools.
28. The Test of English as a Foreign Language should not be required for admission to a United States university.

29. English should be the only international language.
30. Homosexuals should not be allowed to raise children.
31. People should not marry outside their religion.
32. Interracial marriages should be discouraged.
33. Adopted children should know who their natural parents are.
34. Everyone should have a pet.
35. Americans should not buy foreign cars.
36. Parents should be stricter with their children.
37. People over 40 should not have children.
38. Adapting to a new culture is very difficult.
39. Making friends is not easy.
40. Experience is the best teacher.
41. The United States is not really a free society.
42. Americans think they are superior.
43. American food is terrible.
44. The United States is a racist society.
45. Americans do not respect the nuclear family.
46. Watching TV is a waste of time.

Philosophical Issues

1. There is no God.
2. People are basically good.
3. That government is best which governs least.
4. War is inevitable.
5. There is no such thing as fate.
6. Women are inferior to men.
7. People are the same everywhere.

D-ph

8. People who are terminally ill should be allowed to die if they or their family so choose.
9. Suicide should not be considered a crime.
10. Religion is the opiate of the people.
11. Religion should not be permitted in public schools.
12. There can be no happiness without money.
13. There is no such thing as love.
14. There isn't enough laughter in the world.
15. Communication is a miracle.
16. Life is too short.
17. Sometimes it is better to lie than to tell the truth.
18. You usually get what you pay for.
19. Facing up to problems makes you a better person.
20. Loneliness can be beneficial.
21. Conscientious objectors should not have to serve in the military.
22. Violence is sometimes justified.
23. Children of Christian Scientists should not have to have inoculations in order to attend school.
24. All wars are bad for people and nations.
25. Having children is a birthright.
26. Art is man's supreme achievement.
27. Everybody should work.
28. We should disobey a law that is contrary to our own beliefs.
29. There is no justification for terrorism.

Social Issues

1. Television is harmful to society.
2. Abortion should be illegal.
3. Prostitution should be legal.
4. Smoking should be banned in public places.
5. Nuclear energy is the best energy source available.
6. Birth control is against God's will.
7. Sex education should be taught in schools.
8. Capital punishment is a deterrent against crime.
9. The government should supply free housing for everyone.
10. Rich people should be required to give money to charities.
11. The drinking age should be lowered.
12. We must enforce automobile seat belt laws.
13. Drunk drivers should receive mandatory jail sentences.
14. Marijuana should be legalized.
15. Homosexuality is a matter of choice, not a sickness.
16. There should be no TV commercials for children.
17. Ownership of firearms should be carefully regulated by the government.
18. Women should be drafted into the army if there is a war.
19. Women should serve in combat in wartime.
20. Everybody should be required to serve in the military.
21. Old people should live with their families rather than in an old age home.
22. Pornographic material should be censored.
23. Medical care should be free for all people.
24. Traffic rules should be the same throughout the world.
25. Automation is dangerous because it takes jobs away from people.
26. Population control should be strictly enforced by the government.

27. Hunting and fishing should not be restricted in any way.
28. Whales should be a protected species.
29. No government should boycott the Olympics.
30. Professional sports teams should be operated by governments, not private enterprise.
31. Nuclear power plants are dangerous, and all construction of new plants should stop immediately.
32. Cigarettes should be illegal.
33. Safe disposal of nuclear waste is impossible.
34. Newspapers have a responsibility to report facts, no matter who may be hurt.
35. The government should immediately enforce tough anti-pollution laws.
36. Immigration into the United States should be free and unlimited.
37. We can and must put a stop to world hunger.
38 We should have stiffer penalties for all law breakers.

Postscript

The topics presented here are only a tool by which the teacher can induce the students to speak and share ideas. During this process, the teacher and students can identify incorrect speech and work on improving their language. The number of topics one can find is endless, and it is the author's hope that teachers as well as students will be encouraged to make up additional topics of interest, and to use or discard the topics presented in this book, depending on the interests of the class. The topics themselves are irrelevant; rather it is real, stimulating conversations that we are looking to create. If the students want to change the topic or speak about something which happened that day, the teacher must remain flexible enough to accept this change and respect it as meaningful to the student. It is in this atmosphere of mutual respect between teacher and student, student and student, that ideas can be shared, cultures and traditions opened to view, and human beings understood by other human beings. After all, what other purpose is there to communication?

- N.E.Z.

Over 1200 Conversation Topics

Role-Plays

Interviews

Chain Stories

Talks

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